

USA - OHIO: GGAS PARTNER SET DEPARTURE

07 - 14 MAY 2022

By Jacob Roalef



This trip was highlighted by two incredible Kirtland's Warblers!



Overview

This eight-day special Golden Gate Audubon Society (GGAS) tour of Ohio commenced in Detroit in the neighboring state of Michigan on the 7th of May and completed back in Detroit on the 14th of May 2022. The tour visited many of Ohio's great parks and wildlife areas in both the northern and southern portions of the state. These included Magee Marsh State Park, Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, Pearson Metropark, Sharon Woods Metropark, Shawnee State Park and Oak Openings Metropark.

This tour connected with amazing and colorful migrant species and many fantastic Ohio breeding species, giving us a great list for only one week of birding together. Avian highlights included Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Cedar Waxwing, Philadelphia and Yellow-throated Vireos, Sandhill Crane, Black-necked Stilt, Bald Eagle, Acadian Flycatcher and 34 warbler species such as Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Canada, Mourning, Golden-winged and Blackburnian Warblers. We also managed to score not one but TWO Kirtland's Warblers, certainly a difficult and impressive feat to pull off in Ohio.

A total of 149 bird species were seen with one additional heard only species bringing the total recorded to 150. In addition to the birds, some other animals were spotted including **White-tailed Deer**, **Muskrat**, **Eastern Fox Squirrel**, **Common Snapping Turtle**, and the state endangered **Blanding's Turtle**. Full bird and mammal checklists can be found at the end of the report.



Magnolia Warbler was one of the favorite species of the trip and rightfully so.



Detailed Report

Day 1, 7th May 2022. Arrival in Detroit and Ohio birding

All participants on this trip were in Detroit early so we all met up around mid-morning and headed straight to Ohio for lunch and then some afternoon birding. The first birding stop of the day was a local creamery stand with a flooded field behind it where we logged our first species for the trip: **Trumpeter Swan**, **Bald Eagle**, **Great Egret** and **Wood Duck**. From there we headed off to <u>Pearson Metropark</u>, hopeful to find our first warbler of the trip. The birding was a bit slow because the winds had been northerly for the previous few days, keeping birds further south. Despite this, we managed some nice species including **Myrtle** and **Palm Warblers**, **Eastern Bluebird**, **Carolina Wren**, **Chipping Sparrow**, **Baltimore Oriole** and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**. Then we explored the northern portion of Pearson and added **American Yellow Warbler**, **Tree Swallow** and **American Goldfinch**. This was a great start to our Ohio warbler tour.

Day 2, 8th May 2022. First taste of Magee Marsh and Ottawa

We had breakfast and coffee at the hotel and then headed out for our first full day of birding. Our first stop was the famous migration hotspot of Magee Marsh and we spent an entire morning there. The entrance road was surrounded by marsh habitat and scanning through this yielded Blue-winged Teal and Trumpeter Swan. We continued to the main parking lot, slowly worked our way across the trees in the parking lot and then worked the long boardwalk trail here. Although a "slower" day in terms of migration, we still recorded six species of warblers: Black-and-white, American Yellow, Palm, Myrtle and Black-throated Sparrow, Blue Jay, Downy Woodpecker, Grey Catbird, Belted Kingfisher and Warbling Vireo. This was certainly a good introduction to Magee Marsh and some of the migrants and resident species. It was then time for lunch at the local Blackberry Corner Tavern.

After lunch we headed out to Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge and did the auto loop, which was open at this time of year. We started off with a Purple Martin colony at the entrance, an Eastern Phoebe at the bridge and an Eastern Screech-Owl taking a snooze in a tree cavity. There were plenty of Red-winged Blackbirds throughout the drive, as well as American Yellow Warblers. About halfway through, we found some better sections of water and noted Great Blue Heron, Common Gallinule, American Coot, Gadwall and a flock of American White Pelicans flying overhead. Along the back stretch of the drive, we came across Great Horned Owl owlets, with one of the parents off in the distance watching. This was indeed a fantastic auto drive at Ottawa. Then it was time for dinner and back to the hotel for the evening.





It was hard to beat the color pattern of the Black-throated Blue Warbler!

Day 3, 9th May 2022. Drive south and Sharon Woods

We headed out on the long journey to southern Ohio and Shawnee State Park. We decided to take the route through Cincinnati with a stop at the beautiful Sharon Woods Park. Due to recent winds and weather, there were definitely more migrants and bird activity here in southern Ohio than what we had seen up north. It was an absolutely perfect day to be outside birding and right away we were treated to **Chestnut-sided** and **Blackburnian Warblers**. As we ventured further into the park, we picked some jaw dropping closeups of **Magnolia** and **Bay-breasted Warblers** as well as **Northern Cardinal**, **Swainson's Thrush** and **House Wren**. It was such a gorgeous day that we decided to go and fetch our lunch and head back to the park to enjoy it. It's a good thing we did because as soon as we got back, we saw a group of birders who were on a **Kirtland's Warbler!** This rare bird gave all of us amazing point-blank views. Overall, we recorded nine species of warblers at Sharon Woods before moving on.

We arrived at the foothills of the Appalachians, where we stopped at <u>Edge of Appalachia Preserve</u> for about 30 minutes of birding. Here we picked up our first southern breeding warbler species in the form of **Prairie Warbler**. Of course, we ticked a few other new trip birds as well like **Field Sparrow**, **Black Vulture**, **Yellow-breasted Chat** and **Eastern Towhee**. We continued to the lodge for dinner to cap off our long day of driving and birding.

Day 4, 10th May 2022. Shawnee State Park

Shawnee State Park is an amazing forest full of southern breeding species as well as migrants working their way north. We had the entire day to explore this area and take in the beauty of nature. We started off along Pond Lick Road with a singing **Hooded Warbler**, **Northern Parula** and **Yellow-throated Vireo**. We managed to catch up with **Yellow-throated Warbler**, before hitting the top ridge to hopefully find some new migrants. At the top we spotted an **Ovenbird** belting out his song, which echoed through the forest. A **Black-**



throated Green Warbler was singing but unfortunately stayed far too high for us to enjoy. We also enjoyed the rare and state endangered Pink Lady Slipper Orchid. After the sun had risen sufficiently, we headed back down and birded some different territories, looking for breeding species. This was very successful and we picked up Kentucky, Worm-eating, Hooded and Cerulean Warblers.



This Acadian Flycatcher allowed close and prolonged study.

At lunchtime, we enjoyed a picnic on top of a ridge with a scenic overlook whilst being serenaded by Cerulean and Tennessee Warblers. The afternoon was full of more warblers and also some other colorful species like Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush and White-eyed Vireo. As we explored the vast forest, we could hear the song of the Acadian Flycatcher, but it took a while before we could get a visual from a very accommodating bird. The rest of the afternoon was spent back near the lodge and cabins. We had an amazing encounter with an extremely territorial Pine Warbler which nearly collided with our heads as he flew along singing! After dinner at the lodge, we met up in the parking lot to listen for Eastern Whip-poor-will. As we were waiting for the sun to set, a few Common Nighthawks flew by overhead and the Chimney Swifts circled around before going to roost. Once it was dark, we managed to hear several Eastern Whip-poor-wills calling and even found one sitting in the road for a moment! This was another great day in the amazing Shawnee Forest.

Day 5, 11th May 2022. Shawnee State Park and back up north

The morning started off with some birding around the lodge and cabins. **Cerulean Warblers** were singing all around the lodge and we saw our first **Blackpoll Warbler** of the trip, as well as a small flock of **Cedar Waxwings**. We headed back to the lodge to have breakfast and pack up our things. After loading the van, we made another quick stop along Route 1 to target a more southern breeding warbler that we still needed. It didn't take long for us to find a



Louisiana Waterthrush. We watched this bird fly up and down along the fast-moving stream for some time before heading out and starting the long drive back north.

The afternoon was spent around <u>Maumee Bay State Park</u> between the beach and the boardwalk. At the inland beach, we picked up **Caspian** and **Forster's Tern**, both new for the trip. It was a pleasant evening for a stroll along the Maumee boardwalk, where we netted eight warbler species, including a few new ones like the glowing **Prothonotary Warbler** and the chestnut-cheeked **Cape May Warbler**. Some non-warbler species included **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Tree Swallow** and two different roosting **Common Nighthawks**. We finished our walk and headed back to the lodge for a nice dinner. We were already up to 26 species of warblers for the trip and were all excited about what the improved weather would mean for the rest of our time along Lake Erie.



This Northern Waterthrush put on a nice show, strutting around for a minute.

Day 6, 12th May 2022. Oak Openings and Magee Marsh

This morning we headed west and made a stop at <u>Cannonball Prairie</u>, a small park. The prairie and grasslands were fantastic for sparrows and we were not disappointed as we picked up **White-crowned**, **Henslow's**, **Grasshopper** and **Savannah Sparrows**. There were also some **Orchard Orioles** flying around and a couple of **Tennessee Warblers** feasting on the nectar of nearby flowers. After this great start to our day, we headed over to the amazing oaksavannah habitat of <u>Oak Opening Metropark</u>. This vast park hosted a few breeding species we were still needing. We stopped at tornado alley first, for a quick walk and it yielded one of the absolutely best warblers, a **Golden-winged Warbler** singing periodically and giving all of us nice, prolonged views. Further up the trail we came across **Magnolia Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Northern Cardinal**, **Scarlet Tanager** and **Red-headed Woodpecker**. Continuing our way through the park, a quick stop in the sandier area netted us **Lark** and **Field Sparrows** as well as **Eastern Bluebird**, **American Goldfinch** and **Nashville Warbler**. We made another stop in the northern section of the park when, from the van window, we



heard a singing **Blue-winged Warbler**. We got out of the van and all had a nice view. This was another great pickup and then it was off to lunch.

The post-lunch plan was to head to the Magee Marsh boardwalk and spend the afternoon there. Activity had certainly increased since earlier in the week, with 15 warbler species! Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Blackburnian, Magnolia and Prothonotary Warblers were all observed at such close range that we didn't even need binoculars to see their beauty and detail. This was all part of the wonder of this area. A skulking Wilson's Warbler was also added to our warbler list and a Veery in the parking lot area was another nice addition to our trip list. After a nice dinner, we met up at dusk to venture onto some fields near Maumee lodge. As darkness fell, we heard the "peents" of the American Woodcock sounding off and caught a glimpse of it circling high in the air making its display. With a little patience, we eventually got it for a short time in our torch light as it perched along a mowed path. This was a great close to an action-packed day.

Day 7, 13th May 2022. More Magee Marsh and Howard Marsh

On our final full day of the trip, we headed back to Magee Marsh to see what new goodies had dropped in overnight. Birding was excellent and we managed to see 59 species in about three hours, including 19 warblers! Everywhere we turned our heads there was a new bird to be seen. To name just a few, we observed Magnolia, Bay-breasted, American Yellow, Palm, Black-throated Green, Wilson's, Cape May and Nashville Warblers, plus Scarlet Tanager, Lincoln's Sparrow, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush and Brown Thrasher. All of these species were common as we walked and saw multiples of each, most of which were very close up. We also managed to get on a few special species that did require some patience. A Mourning Warbler made brief appearances as it hid in the dense vegetation, but eventually we all managed a glimpse or more. Additionally, a few Canada Warblers were hanging around, but all of them were being sneaky and difficult to see. With patience and determination, we got on one of these gorgeous birds. Towards the end of our walk, we spotted a Northern Waterthrush strutting its stuff along the forest floor, searching for food. It was fun watching the waterthrush do its thing.

After lunch we headed to <u>Howard Marsh</u>, a new park where some fantastic species have been recorded. We picked up <u>Pied-billed Grebe</u>, <u>Semipalmated Sandpiper</u>, <u>Lesser Scaup</u>, <u>Dunlin</u>, <u>Common Tern</u>, <u>Osprey</u> and <u>Bald Eagle</u>. We also spotted a couple of rare breeding birds (for Ohio) that have made good use of this marsh recently: <u>Yellow-headed Blackbird</u> and <u>Black-necked Stilt</u>. In the early evening, we checked out a different area of Magee Marsh called the Estuary Trail. More amazing warbler action was had as we explored this trail, with <u>Chestnut-sided</u>, <u>Bay-breasted</u> and <u>American Yellow Warblers</u> all over the place. Towards the end of the trail, there was a big commotion amongst other birders, who were looking at a <u>Kirtland's Warbler</u>. We hurried there and enjoyed some point-blank views of this special warbler, sometimes less than 15 feet (5 meters) from us! The warblers were fantastic, but there were also some other nice species including <u>Eastern Kingbird</u>, <u>Least Flycatcher</u> and <u>Veery</u>. On our way out, we spotted a stunning <u>Philadelphia Vireo</u> which allowed us close views so that we could really study the key features before it flew off. We couldn't wish for a better final evening to our warbler tour than this and we headed off to dinner to celebrate.





Philadelphia Vireo made the list of favorites of the trip.

Day 8, 14th May 2022. Departure

Our final morning offered a short optional birding session around the boardwalk of Maumee Bay State Park before breakfast. It was a bit of an overcast morning and the birding was slow. The usual **Prothonotary Warblers** which breed in this area were out and about and we were treated to a weeping **Great Crested Flycatcher**. At the end of our walk, just before turning back, we spotted an amazing family of **Eastern Screech-Owls!** We found mom, dad and four little fluffball babies scattered near the nesting cavity they had recently left. On our walk back we got onto a **Hairy Woodpecker** which was new for the trip and ended up being species number 150, a lovely round number to end the trip with! After our walk we met up with those who had stayed behind, grabbed some breakfast, packed our things and headed back to the Detroit airport where we said our goodbyes after a truly fantastic week of birding in Ohio.

Bird List - Following IOC (12.1)

Birds 'heard only' are marked with (H) after the common name, all other species were seen. Species seen only on the pre-trip day of this trip are marked with (+) after the common name.

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following BirdLife International: CE = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Ducks, Geese, Swans (Anatidae)	
Canada Goose	Branta canadensis
Trumpeter Swan	Cygnus buccinator



Common Name	Scientific Name
Wood Duck	Aix sponsa
Blue-winged Teal	Spatula discors
Gadwall	Mareca strepera
Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos
Hooded Merganser	Lophodytes cucullatus
Lesser Scaup	Aythya affinis
Nightjars (Caprimulgidae)	
Common Nighthawk	Chordeiles minor
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Antrostomus vociferus
Swifts (Apodidae)	
Chimney Swift - VU	Chaetura pelagica
Hummingbirds (Trochilidae)	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Archilochus colubris
Pigeons, Doves (Columbidae)	
Rock Dove (Introduced)	Columba livia
Mourning Dove	Zenaida macroura
Rails, Crakes & Coots (Rallidae)	
Sora	Porzana carolina
Common Gallinule	Gallinula galeata
American Coot	Fulica americana
Cranes (Gruidae)	
Sandhill Crane	Antigone canadensis
Grebes (Podicipedidae)	
Pied-billed Grebe	Podilymbus podiceps
Stilts and Avocets (Recurvirostridae)	
Black-necked Stilt	Himantopus mexicanus
Plovers (Charadriidae)	
Grey (Black-bellied) Plover	Pluvialis squatarola
Semipalmated Plover	Charadrius semipalmatus
Killdeer	Charadrius vociferus



Common Name	Scientific Name
Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacidae)	·
Dunlin	Calidris alpina
American Woodcock	Scolopax minor
Spotted Sandpiper	Actitis macularius
Lesser Yellowlegs	Tringa flavipes
Greater Yellowlegs	Tringa melanoleuca
Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Laridae)	
Ring-billed Gull	Larus delawarensis
American Herring Gull	Larus smithsonianus
Caspian Tern	Hydroprogne caspia
Common Tern	Sterna hirundo
Forster's Tern	Sterna forsteri
Cormorants and Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)	
Double-crested Cormorant	Nannopterum auritum
Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns (Ardeid	ae)
Green Heron	Butorides virescens
Great Blue Heron	Ardea herodias
Great Egret	Ardea alba
Pelicans (Pelecanidae)	
American White Pelican	Pelecanus erythrorhynchos
New World Vultures (Cathartidae)	
Black Vulture	Coragyps atratus
Turkey Vulture	Cathartes aura
Ospreys (Pandionidae)	
Western Osprey	Pandion haliaetus
Kites, Hawks, Eagles (Accipitridae)	
Cooper's Hawk	Accipiter cooperii
Bald Eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus
Red-tailed Hawk	Buteo jamaicensis
Acci-tanca Hawk	Duteo jamatensis
Owls (Strigidae)	
Great Horned Owl	Bubo virginianus



Common Name	Scientific Name
Eastern Screech Owl	Megascops asio
Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)	
Belted Kingfisher	Megaceryle alcyon
Woodpeckers (Picidae)	
Red-headed Woodpecker	Melanerpes erythrocephalus
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Melanerpes carolinus
Downy Woodpecker	Dryobates pubescens
Hairy Woodpecker	Leuconotopicus villosus
Northern Flicker	Colaptes auratus
Pileated Woodpecker	Dryocopus pileatus
Tyrant Flycatchers (Tyrannidae)	
Eastern Phoebe	Sayornis phoebe
Eastern Wood Pewee	Contopus virens
Acadian Flycatcher	Empidonax virescens
Least Flycatcher	Empidonax minimus
Eastern Kingbird	Tyrannus tyrannus
Great Crested Flycatcher	Myiarchus crinitus
Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis (Vireon	idae)
Red-eyed Vireo	Vireo olivaceus
Philadelphia Vireo	Vireo philadelphicus
Warbling Vireo	Vireo gilvus
Yellow-throated Vireo	Vireo flavifrons
Blue-headed Vireo	Vireo solitarius
White-eyed Vireo	Vireo griseus
Crows, Jays, and Magpies (Corvidae)	
Blue Jay	Cyanocitta cristata
American Crow	Corvus brachyrhynchos
Waxwings (Bombycillidae)	
Cedar Waxwing	Bombycilla cedrorum
Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice (Paridae)	1
Tufted Titmouse	Baeolophus bicolor
Carolina Chickadee	Poecile carolinensis



Common Name	Scientific Name
Black-capped Chickadee	Poecile atricapillus
Larks (Alaudidae)	
Horned Lark	Eremophila alpestris
Swallows (Hirundinidae)	
Tree Swallow	Tachycineta bicolor
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Stelgidopteryx serripennis
Purple Martin	Progne subis
Barn Swallow	Hirundo rustica
American Cliff Swallow	Petrochelidon pyrrhonota
Wrens (Troglodytidae)	
Carolina Wren	Thryothorus ludovicianus
House Wren	Troglodytes aedon
Gnatcatchers (Polioptilidae)	
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	Polioptila caerulea
Nuthatches (Sittidae)	
White-breasted Nuthatch	Sitta carolinensis
Mockingbirds, Thrashers (Mimidae)	
Grey Catbird	Salpinctes obsoletus
Northern Mockingbird	Catherpes mexicanus
Brown Thrasher	Cistothorus palustris
Starlings, Rhabdornis (Sturnidae)	
Common (European) Starling	Sturnus vulgaris
Thrushes and Allies (Turdidae)	
Eastern Bluebird	Sialia sialis
Wood Thrush (H)	Hylocichla mustelina
Swainson's Thrush	Catharus ustulatus
Veery	Catharus fuscescens
American Robin	Turdus migratorius
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches (Passeridae)	
House Sparrow	Passer domesticus



Common Name	Scientific Name	
Finches, Euphonias (Fringillidae)		
House Finch (Introduced)	Haemorhous mexicanus	
American Goldfinch	Spinus tristis	
New World Sparrows (Passerellidae)		
Grasshopper Sparrow	Ammodramus savannarum	
Lark Sparrow	Chondestes grammacus	
Chipping Sparrow	Spizella passerina	
Field Sparrow	Spizella pusilla	
Dark-eyed Junco	Junco hyemalis	
White-crowned Sparrow	Zonotrichia leucophrys	
White-throated Sparrow	Zonotrichia albicollis	
Henslow's Sparrow	Centronyx henslowii	
Savannah Sparrow	Passerculus sandwichensis	
Song Sparrow	Melospiza melodia	
Lincoln's Sparrow	Melospiza lincolnii	
Eastern Towhee	Pipilo erythrophthalmus	
Yellow-breasted Chat (Icteriidae)		
Yellow-breasted Chat	Icteria virens	
Oropendolas, Orioles, Blackbirds (Icteridae)		
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus	
Baltimore Oriole	Icterus galbula	
Orchard Oriole	Icterus spurius	
Red-winged Blackbird	Agelaius phoeniceus	
Brown-headed Cowbird	Molothrus ater	
Common Grackle	Quiscalus quiscula	
New World Warblers (Parulidae)		
Ovenbird	Seiurus aurocapilla	
Worm-eating Warbler	Helmitheros vermivorum	
Louisiana Waterthrush	Parkesia motacilla	
Northern Waterthrush	Parkesia noveboracensis	
Golden-winged Warbler	Vermivora chrysoptera	
Blue-winged Warbler	Vermivora cyanoptera	
Black-and-white Warbler	Mniotilta varia	
Prothonotary Warbler	Protonotaria citrea	
Tennessee Warbler	Leiothlypis peregrina	



Common Name	Scientific Name
Nashville Warbler	Leiothlypis ruficapilla
Mourning Warbler	Geothlypis philadelphia
Kentucky Warbler	Geothlypis formosa
Common Yellowthroat	Geothlypis trichas
Hooded Warbler	Setophaga citrina
American Redstart	Setophaga ruticilla
Kirtland's Warbler (Rarity)	Setophaga kirtlandii
Cape May Warbler	Setophaga tigrina
Cerulean Warbler	Setophaga cerulea
Northern Parula	Setophaga americana
Magnolia Warbler	Setophaga magnolia
Bay-breasted Warbler	Setophaga castanea
Blackburnian Warbler	Setophaga fusca
American Yellow Warbler	Setophaga aestiva
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Setophaga pensylvanica
Blackpoll Warbler	Setophaga striata
Black-throated Blue Warbler	Setophaga caerulescens
Palm Warbler	Setophaga palmarum
Pine Warbler	Setophaga pinus
Myrtle Warbler	Setophaga coronata
Yellow-throated Warbler	Setophaga dominica
Prairie Warbler	Setophaga discolor
Black-throated Green Warbler	Setophaga virens
Canada Warbler	Cardellina canadensis
Wilson's Warbler	Cardellina pusilla
Cardinals and Allies (Cardinalidae)	
Scarlet Tanager	Piranga olivacea
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Pheucticus ludovicianus
Northern Cardinal	Cardinalis cardinalis
Indigo Bunting	Passerina cyanea
Total Seen	149
Total Heard	1
Total Recorded	150



Mammal List

Common Name	Scientific Name	
Squirrels and Relatives (Sciuridae)		
Woodchuck	Marmota monax	
Eastern Gray Squirrel	Sciurus carolinensis	
Eastern Fox Squirrel	Sciurus niger	
Eastern Chipmunk	Tamias striatus	
Rodents (Cricetidae)		
Muskrat	Ondatra zibethicus	
Rabbits and Hares (Leporidae)		
Eastern Cottontail	Sylvilagus floridanus	
Raccoons and Relatives (Procyonidae)		
Northern Raccoon	Procyon lotor	
Deer, Elk, Mooses (Cervidae)		
White-tailed Deer	Odocoileus virginianus	
Total Seen	8	

